



FROM THE COORDINATOR'S DESK — KATHLEEN STEWART

Over the past few years, there have been many 'groundhog' days where it felt like each day was simply a replay of the day prior with no forward momentum at all. Thankfully, we appear to be emerging from the ground and heading back to where we were pre-pandemic...at least in terms of returning to the campus and once again seeing busy hallways, classrooms and yes, Tim Horton's lineups! I never thought I would long for those days but it's funny how a world-wide pandemic can change your perspective.

The Law Clerk Advanced and Fast Track programs are scheduled to return to campus for the fall 2022 term and I for one am thrilled. No matter how convenient the remote environment was, it was a poor substitute for the dynamic environment that a thriving campus provides. We tuned in and out for our class time and lost the relationship building time that was spent between classes, during class breaks, and in the hallways and offices on campus.

For the first time in two years, we held in-person convocation in June and hosted 10 (count them...TEN) graduation ceremonies to allow 2020 and 2021 graduates to take their place on the stage and celebrate their achievements alongside of the 2022 graduates. It was long overdue and oh so satisfying!

As we wrap up the 2021-22 school year, there are a lot of changes happening on our campus (see "College Undergoes Change" for full details). Stephanie Ball, the Dean of our School is retiring after 17 years and I will be stepping down as the Program Coordinator after too many years to count. I am looking forward to spending more time in the classroom with students and less time in meetings.

Sandy Smith, a new full-time hire into the Paralegal and Law Clerk programs, will be taking on the role of Program Coordinator. Though Sandy is a new full-time hire, she is not new to Durham College and we are lucky to have her supporting our students both in and out of the classroom.

I hope you all have a wonderful — normal — summer. Normal never sounded so good.

Kathleen Stewart



NETWORKING 2022 –VIRTUAL...AGAIN!

In 2021, the Law Clerk Advanced program's Networking Event went virtual along with just about everything else in the world. At the end of the event, many of us spoke about how nice it would be in 2022 to resume the in-person event. Little did we know!

The 2021 event was hosted on MS TEAMS and though we all persevered, compatibility issues and technology inequities for students made it all a little challenging. Thankfully, we were used to these tech hiccups and were able to work through the event. Using the feedback from students and employers alike who experienced the 2021 event, we adjusted the event format slightly, opened it up to different platforms and were on our way.

More time was allocated for students to meet with each employer to account for the inevitable technology challenges. Employers used the platform of their choice and we had Zoom, WebEx and MS TEAMS in the mix in 2022! There were far fewer technology issues and it gave students more insight into what might await them in the 'new' post-pandemic work world.

Many thanks to all of our wonderful employers who participated in the event this year including:

Aird & Berlis LLP

Bennett Jones LLP

Davies, Ward Phillips
& Vineberg LLP

Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP

Municipal Property Assessment
Corporation

Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP

Travelers Insurance Canada

Cynthia Kelly & Kendra March

Kathy Anderson

Karen Keane & Franc Dupont

Alexis Fitzjohn

Krystin DeMaeyer, Ryan Rahika,
Grant Telfer, Brittany Charles

Kathy Tapper

Vanessa Destine

Congratulations to all of our graduates who secured employment following the networking event. For 2023, we will be moving the event up in the calendar (early March) to better support the employer recruitment cycle and position our soon-to-be graduates for success!

COLLEGE UNDERGOES CHANGE — ACADEMIC REALIGNMENT

In April of this year, the college announced a massive realignment of the academic portfolio to better reflect the modern world of work. This realignment means significant program and personnel changes for almost every academic area.

For some time now, the college has been organized into academic 'schools'. E.g. School of Justice & Emergency Services, School of Health and so on. The college has adopted new nomenclature where 'schools' will now be referred to as 'faculties'. E.g. Faculty of Health Sciences, Faculty of Media Art & Design.

For the School of Justice & Emergency Services (SOJES), the realignment brings significant changes. This academic portfolio will now be called the Faculty of Social & Community Services (SCS). Programs formerly in the SOJES like the paramedic program and emergency services fundamentals program will move to the Faculty of Health Sciences. Community and social service related programs like early childhood education and development services worker will move from the Faculty of Health Sciences to the Faculty of SCS.

The realignment brings office staffing changes. The movement of several programs into the new Faculty of SCS means we will have two Associate Deans instead of one. The search is on for the Associate Dean who will manage the legal programs, while Joanne Spicer will remain and manage the social/community programs. Claire McCormack, Manager of SOJES will be moving to the new Faculty of Liberal Studies. We are sorry to see Claire go! Finally, with Stephanie's retirement, Ralph Hofmann (formerly the Associate Dean of SOJES) will return to the faculty as the new Dean.

For a full list of programs now under the Faculty of Social & Community Services, please visit the following link:

<https://durhamcollege.ca/academic-faculties/faculty-of-social-community-services>

POST YOUR JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREE — DC CAREER PORTAL

I routinely hear from individuals in my network who are recruiting, hopeful that I will have a job-ready candidate to fill their opportunity. The truth is, I receive so many of these types of requests that I could have a full-time job on the side as a recruiter if not for my full-time job!

I'm always happy to promote opportunities to my extensive alumni network through LinkedIn and our networking event, but the college has an amazing, free portal that connects employers to ALL college alumni.

Employers simply need to set up a free account. After the account is approved, employers are free to self-manage their postings and applicant submissions.

To set up your free employer account now, visit the portal at

<https://hired.durhamcollege.ca/employers/overview.htm>



MIND THE GAP — EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT THROUGH WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING

CO-OP & FIELD PLACEMENT

No matter where you go these days, you can't avoid hearing about how difficult it is to find employees. You don't necessarily hear companies qualify their statement by saying 'good' employees. There is simply a shortage of employees in all sectors.

As large numbers of senior level clerks, assistants, and practice managers ready themselves for retirement, legal employers everywhere know that there aren't enough junior and intermediate people to take their place. In the post-secondary landscape, we are producing fewer graduates in legal support programs than even five years ago — dramatically fewer. The gap is there and it will grow in the coming months and years if we all don't start thinking differently and doing things differently.

Employers can help themselves bridge the gap by actively engaging in Field Placement and Cooperative Education Programs offered by colleges — often referred to as Work Integrated Learning (WIL).

WIL can give employers a leg up on recruitment efforts. It's low risk, low cost, and there is great potential for WIL students to become full-time employees, ready to hit the ground running upon graduation. Employers who take students on while they are still in school may find ideal summer contract employees through WIL programs.

With a minimal investment of time and effort, you could find your next great employee by participating in WIL.

For information on the Law Clerk Advanced Field Placement Program, please contact Kathleen Stewart at kathleen.stewart@durhamcollege.ca

For information on the Law Clerk Advanced Co-op Program please contact Anna De Grauwe at anna.degrauwe@durhamcollege.ca

What are you waiting for?



SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

Legal Reflections is published annually in June. If you would like to make a submission, please contact Kathleen Stewart, Program Coordinator at Kathleen.Stewart@durhamcollege.ca.

Submissions could include:

- Alumni profiles
- Trends in the legal field
- Changes in the legal field
- New legislation impacts
- Any topic that might be of interest to alumni





ALUMNI PROFILE — SAMANTHA HOSKIN, CLASS OF 2015

There can be a lot of hurdles and barriers for people who want to gain an education and I was no exception. Homeless at 16 years of age, I was someone in the ‘system’ in order to survive, but I wanted to get an education where I knew I would be guaranteed a job and develop great transferable skills. It was clear to me that the Law Clerk Advanced program would provide me with that opportunity. It was the proudest moment of my life when I was able to tell my social assistance worker, “I don’t need you anymore!”

And while the program provided me with the opportunity, it was through a great deal of hard work and perseverance that I was able to succeed in the program. I have been continuously employed since graduating and have a bright career ahead of me.

The field placement component of the Law Clerk Advanced program gave me an opportunity to overcome my shy nature and build critical people skills and confidence. Though I worked in a corporate legal environment for my placement and thought that is where I would ultimately end up, I landed a position in a traditional law firm working in real estate. I didn’t truly feel comfortable in the environment; it just didn’t feel like the right fit for me but remaining open minded was important to the success that I enjoy today.

First National Financial was an organization that I dealt with frequently in my first job after graduation, and I found the people there to be really wonderful to work with. So, I took a chance, left the job that didn’t feel right for me and accepted a 6-month contract with First National. Within three months, I was offered a full-time job and have been with them ever since. There were times early in my career when I thought I didn’t belong working alongside people with degrees, but I quickly realized that success has less to do with formal education and more to do with a willingness to learn and ability to adapt.

Currently, I am a residential funder who works closer with lawyers to ensure that all of the mortgage requirements are met. It is a fast-paced work environment and I am supported by a wonderful team and manager. My goal is to progress to an associate underwriter and eventually become an underwriter — a goal that is firmly within reach for me.

My advice to existing students and graduates is this: be open to learning new things, don’t limit yourself to a specific area of law before you know what’s really out there, and go the extra mile! Treat field placement as a job as it’s a representation of what you will be like as an employee. Stick with it! There were many times I wanted to quit in the early days after graduation because I wasn’t in the right job for me but I stuck with it, built my skills and was able to move to a job that was a great fit for me. If I had given up, I would have missed the opportunity that led to the career I have had for the past six years. Finally, keep the lines of communication open. I started to think that in order to grow in my career, I would have to leave my company but by having open and honest conversations about my career goals with my manager, I learned that there were great opportunities for me right where I was.



ALUMNI PROFILE — JESSICA EARLE, CLASS OF 2020

My interest in law began in a first-year university international law class. My professor was dynamic, engaging, and made me realize just how much I wanted to be a part of the legal field. I began doing some research into various legal professions: lawyer, paralegal, assistant, and law clerk. I was not ready to start a treacherous law school journey and felt that I wanted to dip my toes into the legal field. With that in mind, I looked into Durham College and the various programs they offered. I actually began my college path in the Legal Office Administration program until I was approached by Kathleen who suggested I might be better suited to the Law Clerk program.

She was absolutely right. As soon as I made the switch, it felt like I was in exactly the right place.

During my second-year field placement, I used the two-week opportunity to try out the downtown Toronto commuting lifestyle. I realized quickly it was not for me and in my third-year placement, I applied to a well known local firm in Oshawa. I began my placement at Kelly Greenway Bruce and found a home. Nearing the end of my placement, I was offered a position to become a Law Clerk for an amazing lawyer in their Civil Litigation department. I have had the privilege of working with a lawyer that has helped me to become a better clerk each and every day.

Our firm has continued to offer field placement opportunities to Law Clerk to students and since being here, I have had the pleasure of being the first one to work with four placement students and help train them for a career I know they will love. Having the opportunity to work with students and help them reach their full potential while being so new to a career myself is a unique experience. I have found that I really love teaching and mentoring and I am so thankful to my firm for allowing me to have that opportunity.

I cannot wait to see where my journey takes me. I hope to continue learning and growing as a Law Clerk.



FACULTY PROFILE — LAURA SCOTT

REAL ESTATE LAW CLERK, TOWN OF WHITBY & PROFESSOR EXTRAORDINAIRE

The Law Clerk Advanced program has been fortunate to have many current legal support professionals teach students on a part-time basis. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to learn from people in the thick of whatever area of law they specialize in.

In September of 2021, amidst the backdrop of the pandemic, students were fortunate to have real estate guru Laura Scott teach the Land Planning & Municipal Government course. In all of my 24 years of teaching at the college and supporting part-time faculty, I can honestly say I have never had someone as excited about real estate as Laura! And when someone is as excited about a topic as she is, you just know that learning is going to happen.

Laura graduated from the Law Clerk program at Humber College with honours in 1999 and immediately entered the real estate practice area. She worked her way up the legal ladder assuming positions as a senior real estate law clerk and department manager in Durham Region law firms before moving to her current position as the Real Estate Law Clerk with the Town of Whitby.

Her passion for teaching is matched only by her passion for learning - she received accreditation as a Certified Expert in Real Estate Law with the Institute of Law Clerks of Ontario in 2018 which was followed by her successful completion of the Ontario Mortgage Agent Course through Mortgage Professionals of Canada. Currently, Laura is working towards her Diploma in Municipal Administration through AMCTO (Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario) to further enhance her career in municipal and planning law.

“Teaching at Durham College is so rewarding as my years of professional experience in real estate and municipal law can now be shared and passed on to the next generation of Ontario’s Law Clerks.”